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The model program described in this Title III project report was developed "to eliminate the need for segregated classes for handicapped children in remote school systems." The underlying assumption of the program is that, if the regular teacher is (1) supported by a staff of specially trained resource personnel whole roles are clearly defined and (2) offered inservice training in ways of recognizing and meeting the special needs of the physiologically or psychologically handicapped student, the needs of these children can be met both more efficiently and more effectively within the context of the regular classroom. Essential to this particular program, in which a school cadre works cooperatively to analyze the handicapped student's learning style and to develop creative and appropriate methods for responding to it, is a learning analyst (here referred to as a child-study teacher). His primary function is to serve as intermediary between the resource staff, the classroom teacher, and the individual student throughout the cycle of referral, preconference, observation, consultation, diagnosis, analysis, and postconference. By the end of the cycle it is expected that the competency of the classroom teacher will have been upgraded to the point that she will be able to assume the major responsibility for the continuing education of the handicapped child. (JS)

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Learninganalysis
A PACE Project

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Sept. 1969

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the project is to develop a model program to eliminate the need for segregated classes for handicapped* children in remote school systems.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. The regular classroom teacher will be able to assess the strengths and potential, rather than disability, of the handicapped child.

2. Handicapped students with a favorable prognosis will be helped to overcome their disability to the degree that they (a) can participate in the regular classroom program and (b) can continue their education with no further assistance from a specialist.

3. The efficiency of students having handicaps with less favorable prognosis will be increased to the extent that they (a) can remain in their regular classroom and (b) continue their education with decreasing assistance from a specialist.

* In this project, a handicapped child is one who has physiological or psychological deficits that prevent him from succeeding in regular education programs designed for persons without such handicaps.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1968-69 year the Title III, ESEA project, administered through the Child Study Center, has attempted to help the regular classroom teacher in remote rural school districts, feel more competent in working with handicapped youngsters. Teachers frequently want more special classes for "youngsters with problems". However a special class often becomes a "dumping ground" with little benefit to the student in terms of his individual needs. The Title III program is attempting to counteract this tendency with the in-service emphasis directed toward increased recognition of individual differences of handicapped children.

During the project's first year, there was a tendency for teachers to choose to send the child "out to be cured" by a Child Study Center Specialist. Often teachers tend to rely too much on this outside assistance and that is felt to be detrimental in two ways. First, the outside "cure" very often is effective only so long as the child <u>is outside</u>. When the youngster returns to class, the chronic problems persist. There seems to be a gap between the clinical and classroom efforts. Secondly, the lack of student progress sometimes termed "educational failure" is seen as a tremendous economic burden on small school districts. Under-achievement, grade retentions, and the cost of special classes can become expensive for these districts.

The initial approach taken by the Child Study Center was the typical etiological and/or diagnostic-remedial approach. After a referral a youngster was tested to determine his deficiencies. An attempt was made to consider the causes (etiological) as well as to determine the strengths and deficits in terms of psycholinguistics, or information-processing abilities (diagnostic-remedial). A diagnosis was made, and a remedial program was recommended on this basis.

During the in-service presentations (1) "diagnostic teaching" and (2) "task analysis" were emphasized. Neither approach in itself seemed entirely satisfactory. The first approach still encouraged diagnosis by the Child Study Center staff and remediation by the teacher. This dichotomy impaired understanding and the two persons involved frequently misunderstood what the other was trying to do.

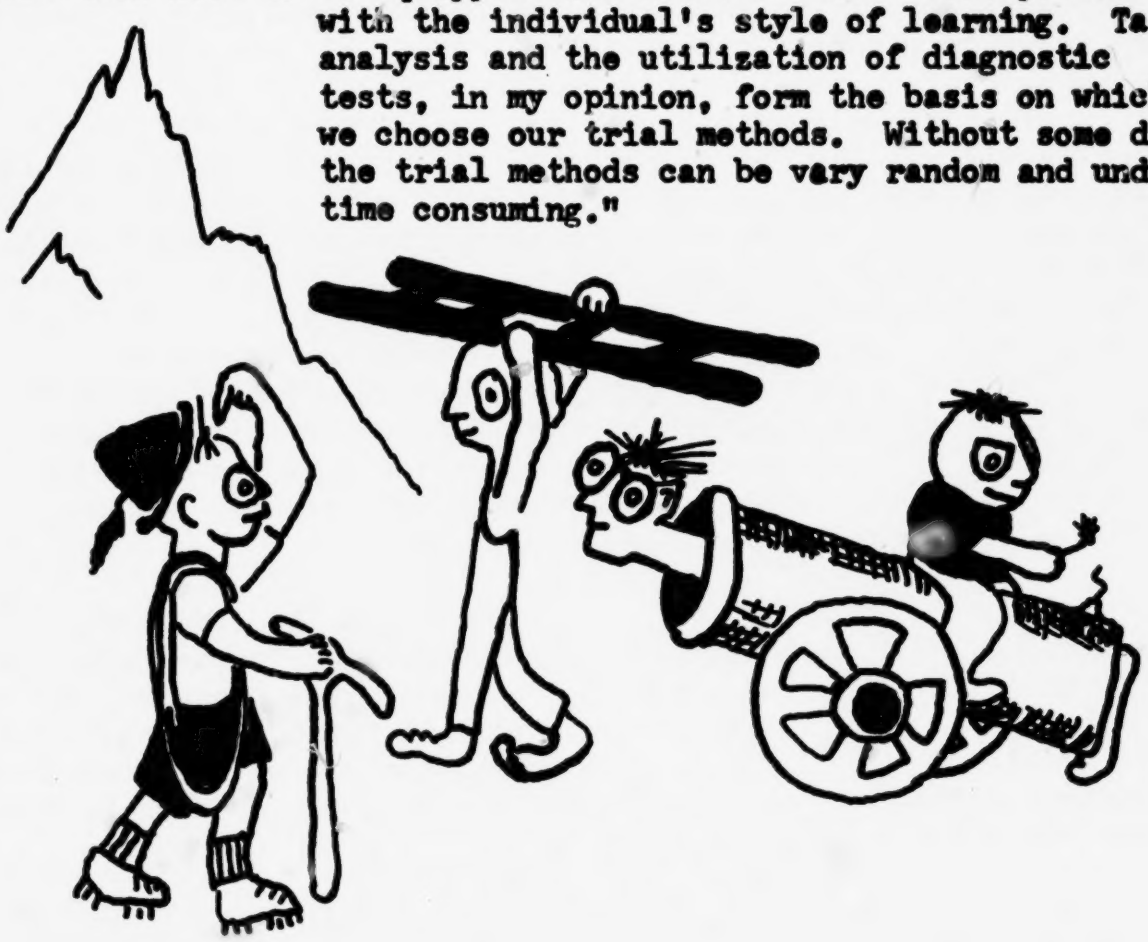
1. The classroom teacher felt dependent on the diagnostician, and the information at hand was fractional and not integrated by any one person.

2. The task analysis approach was useful to the teachers, though some felt the emphasis was on the learning task and not on the method by which a child learns best. It was shown in practice that one method was not suited to all educationally handicapped found in a classroom. Both approaches have contributed to the concept that what works best is flexibility in choice of the method that may be used with individual children.

The remedialdiagnostic approach introduced by Keith E. Beery is defined as "the systematic trial of several likely remedial approaches to a given problem". In this process the "remedialdiagnostician" judges various alternative teaching methods on the basis of which is most successful in teaching a given task to a particular child.

At the 1969 CEC Conference in Denver, Barbara Bateman emphasized the need to analyze teaching methods rather than focus on the remediation of the child. The idea that appealed to staff members attending the conference was the emphasis on instruction as the dynamic which must be varied if it is to be a useful experience for each learner.

In a discussion of the classroom teachers' role, in the treatment of learning disabilities, Doris Johnson states that "...if we analyze learning tasks or processes, the teacher would then need to be equipped with methods which corresponded with the individual's style of learning. Task analysis and the utilization of diagnostic tests, in my opinion, form the basis on which we choose our trial methods. Without some data the trial methods can be very random and unduly time consuming."



LEARNING ANALYSIS

The LEARNING ANALYSIS approach is an outgrowth of the methods discussed above, and is the term given to the point of view adopted by the Routt County Title III project.

The Learning Analysis approach begins with a formal referral made by a concerned teacher. A pre-conference is held at the school between the classroom teacher, building principal, and Child Study Center staff. The Child Study staff includes psychologist, speech therapist, and child study teacher.* The purpose of this pre-conference is to discuss the factors leading to the referral; the teacher's impression of the student's individual differences and to determine what questions should be answered in order to analyze the child's individual learning style.

In a pre-conference, hopefully there will have been evolved guidelines for the child study teacher to use as he observes the child in a "difficult to learn" situation. Of crucial importance is the question: How does the child arrive at responses evoked as he confronts his problem? Doris Johnson advises that this is "...most crucial in understanding the distorted processing and the types of strategies a child uses to solve his problems." Since most examinations are of a static nature, we often have but little opportunity to note the more basic and dynamic ways or processes by which a youngster absorbs information nor the processes by which he acquires other skills.

A child's response to what he is learning varies according to the size of the group, and to what the child feels the teacher expects of him. A youngster frequently behaves differently in the evaluator's office or in an individual conference than he does in the classroom with many children. While much can be learned from the interaction between child and teacher in a small group, the learner eventually must return to his homeroom and interact with his peers. The main emphasis should be upon finding the most effective methods that can be used with an individual student in the regular classroom setting. In this way, the student with a different style of learning is thought of, reacted to, and educated along with other individuals in the class.

Accurate observations can be made with the longitudinal approach. With this approach the child study teacher observes the child in several learning situations. The procedure has a built-in follow-up throughout the entire period of observation. It enables the child study teacher to explore with the child the various methods of learning, and to record the process by which the child learns a given task.

* This is the term used for the Title III specialist most nearly full time in the local school district and primarily responsible for implementing the Learning Analysis Methodology.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH

As always the classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for the child's education. The child study teacher serves as the vehicle for integrating and applying the wide range of information about the individual child's educational need.

The child study teacher, and classroom teacher are assisted by the Title III Child Study Center staff. A multidisciplinary approach is used in all conferences. The professional staff will provide one day a week for the children with whom the child study teacher is working in each school district. The staff's primary role will be to obtain data and consult with the child study teacher. It is he who co-ordinates the team's efforts as they observe the child with his peers, with the child study teacher, and by professionally acceptable evaluative procedures. They alert the child study teacher to any variables which they note to be significant. The staff also will assist in consulting with the child's parents, teacher, physician, and others when appropriate.

The child study teacher then proceeds, with the help of specialists, to assist the child using suggested alternative methods for teaching a particular task. He will keep a continuous record of methods attempted and the child's response to them. Consultation notes will be included. The child study teacher and the classroom teacher will review these records periodically. The child study teacher has the responsibility of writing a detailed summary of significant findings and submitting this report to the building principal to be filed in the child's record so long as the student is in the special program.

The child study teacher will have a flexible schedule so he will be available when needed by the child and by the classroom teacher. The optimal time for beginning a study is prior to or at the peak of the difficulty. In a sense, the procedure is problem oriented. Based upon past experience, this is the point in time when child and classroom teacher are most susceptible to new ideas.

POST CONFERENCES

Post-conferences will follow the study period. The time span of these conferences will vary according to the severity of the problem. These conferences will have as a primary goal the in-service training of elementary teachers. Teachers not included in the study process will be included in the discussion. The Child Study staff will participate in these meetings and honest differences will be presented. The parents will also be included in Post Conferences. The child study teacher will then be responsible for periodic follow-up of all children involved to determine the youngsters' progress and extend further help if needed. He will however become less responsible for teaching the child as the classroom teacher increases her involvement.

SUMMARY

In the future, in rural school districts, a child study teacher in each elementary building could easily reverse the need for "special classes" and encourage the teaching of youngsters with handicaps in the regular classrooms by teachers better prepared to help the atypical child. The classroom teacher would have the help of this resource colleague and would not feel overburdened by "more work". The program could serve as a medium for upgrading education and teacher competency, as well as serving the need of handicapped youngsters at minimal expense to the school districts.

This procedure reduces the responsibility placed on one teacher or one specialist for the education of the "different child".

This program suggests that, since the classroom teacher is not expected to be a speech therapist, educational specialist, or psychologist, there is a continuing need for the resource specialists in the school district to aid the classroom teacher with instructional problems. Sensitive people in many facetsof education are encouraged to work together to analyze the handicapped students' learning style, and to develop creative methods for reaching these students' learning potential.

THE SCHOOL'S ROLE

The participating school districts have the legal responsibility for carrying out the Title III activities as approved by the state Title III Advisory Board and according to the federal law under which this project is funded.

Scope of the Program

The program is limited to kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children. However, the in-service training extends to other teachers in the elementary buildings. The program may deal with any of the classifications of handicaps recognized under the Colorado Handicapped Childrens Law. The degree of handicap will agree with the Colorado Department of Education, Special Education guidelines.

Local Administration

The elementary principal has a major responsibility for the program management in each district. All referrals are initiated and staffing is co-ordinated through the building principal.

The building principal maintains a district file where-in records of each project student are kept. The records include information such as referral, proceedings of preliminary staffing, copies of evaluation data, plans for remediation, anecdotal records, memos of parent conferences, periodic student progress appraisal, summary reports, and evaluation of teachers' professional growth.

The building principal is responsible for supervision of the classroom teachers' commitments to the instruction of the project students. He will collect data and submit a monthly report to the superintendent who will give a copy of the report to the project director.

Staffing

Although most referrals are made by the classroom teacher it is possible for referrals to come from the parent or from a member of the Child Study Center staff. The staffing team consists of the principal, classroom teacher, the child study teacher, psychologist, and other specialists, and meet weekly.

To insure the type of communications necessary in all conferences, arrangements will be made so that the referring teacher is free from classroom duties at the time of the conferences.

The remedial reading teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, and other special services personnel, will be included in conferences if they have relevant knowledge of these handicapped youngsters.

The local school administrators have established the concept that teachers are expected to try the method suggested by the child study teacher. A teacher who refuses to try the recommendations, will accept full responsibility for the child's education.

THE DIRECTOR'S ROLE

The Title III Project Director is responsible for the integrity of the implementation of the program. His specific responsibilities include:

Planning: Toward the end of each program year the specific goals and procedures for the following year must be anticipated. The direction of the project activities are influenced by the progress of the program as determined by its internal evaluation, and the observations of the on-sight visitation team. It is the philosophy of the director that the views of all persons who participate in the project shall be considered in formulating plans.

Administration: The director is the administrative agent of the Child Study Center Board which is composed of the superintendent of each participation school district. The participating school districts share the legal responsibility for carrying out the Title III activities as approved by the State Title III Advisory Board and according to the federal law. The project director must report monthly to the Child Study Center Board as well as to the State Title III Director as to the expenditure of funds and fiscal condition of the project. He has the responsibility for preparing the budget and submitting it to the Board for approval, and for managing the project within the approved budget. The director relates directly with the State Title III office and the implementation of both the State and local plans are enhanced by this liaison.

Supervision: The director personally supervises each Title III staff member. The fulfillment of the role of each staff member is assessed and guided by the director.

The Child Study Center Board has vested in its director the authority to recruit necessary personnel, to assign each member to his job, and to prepare job descriptions subject to Board approval. He is also responsible for judging the professional competencies of the Title III staff and recommending tenure.

Evaluation: It is essential that innovative programs such as those under Title III ESEA be subjected to an on-going evaluation as well as an end-of-the-year determination of how well the project goals have been attained. The Routt County program is concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of teaching techniques for handicapped students rather than measuring the amount of student success with an established methodology. The project director maintains periodic progress records on all students.

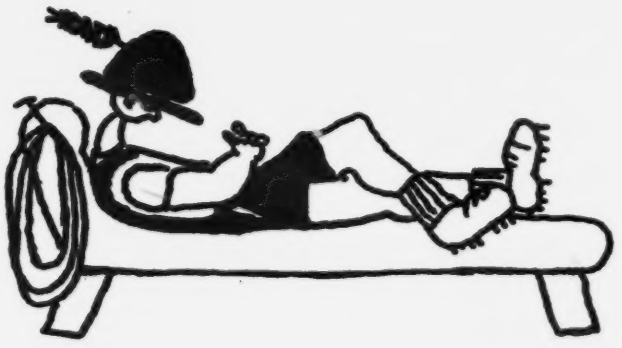
THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST'S ROLE

The school psychologist's primary function is to serve as a consultant on the Child Study Center staff consultation team. The permanent consultation team consists of a psychologist and speech correctionist. Temporary members of the team include a social worker, child psychiatrist, classroom teachers, school counselor, and representatives of various local agencies. The team works cooperatively with the child study teacher and district personnel. The psychologist provides valuable information, opinions, and judgments which enable the team to formulate recommendations and remedial techniques for children with problems in learning so the best possible learning climate may be available to handicapped youngsters.

Staffing: The psychologist evaluates individual children when certain psychological information is desired by the team. His individual study of children includes the use of professionally accepted evaluation techniques, testing, interviewing, occasional counseling, classroom observation, review of school records, collection of relevant data from teachers, parents, agencies, and other available sources. All conferences are attended by the classroom teacher, school administrator, child study teacher, speech correctionist, etc. This allows many professionals working with a particular child to receivethe reports of the psychologist and other specialists, simultaneously. These conferences differ from "staffings" in that there is less emphasis on the diagnosis of a child and more emphasis on the analysis of learning styles for each child.

In-service Training: Some of the psychologist's time is devoted to in-service training and reviewing remedial materials and methodology. The psychologist participates, assists in planning, and serves as a consultant to others participating in the in-service program for teachers. He gives general information to teachers about handicapped students - and helps with specific problems that individual students have in the classroom.

Evaluation: He assists the program director in the on-going evaluation of the Title III program. He helps plan and conducts the evaluation of the Title III program. He helps plan the evaluation procedures.



SPEECH CORRECTIONIST'S ROLE

The role of speech correctionist entails responsibilities as a member of the Child Study Center Title III consultation team, and includes individualized efforts toward the alleviation of speech, language and hearing problems. Specific circumstances dictate whether speech correction services will be directed to the child study teacher, the classroom teacher or the child himself.

In the Learning Analysis approach to educational problems the primary function of the speech correctionist is to investigate speech and language problems and to explore methods to help the child. Children are taken from the classroom for problem assessment, method evaluation and specific therapy. The speech correctionist shares pertinent information with the child study teacher. Appropriate methods, materials and techniques for dealing with speech and language problems are demonstrated to the classroom teacher. It is expected that the classroom teacher will learn to deal with some speech and language problems with the support and direction of the correctionist.

Progress reports to provide information to parents, teachers and administrators and to serve as records are prepared at the end of each month. These reports are submitted to the building principal for inclusion in his reports and a copy filed in each project student's folder.

The speech correctionist participates also in on-going program planning, in-service training and evaluation of the program.

The last two weeks of the school year are used for post-evaluation and end-of-the-year summarization.

Speech correctionists must have a Masters Degree in Speech Therapy and be certified by the Colorado State Department of Education as a Speech Correctionist. A familiarity with the aspects of language growth, language disabilities and language improvement are necessary.

THE CHILD STUDY TEACHER'S ROLE

The Learning Analyst is referred to as a "child study teacher". His role includes evaluating children, staffing, reporting, providing special services to children, researching techniques and materials, and providing in-service training for teachers.

The child study teacher receives referrals through the building principal. The children are evaluated individually through classroom observation, teacher interviews, formal testing with assistance from the Child Study Center staff, and periodic follow-ups to determine progress.

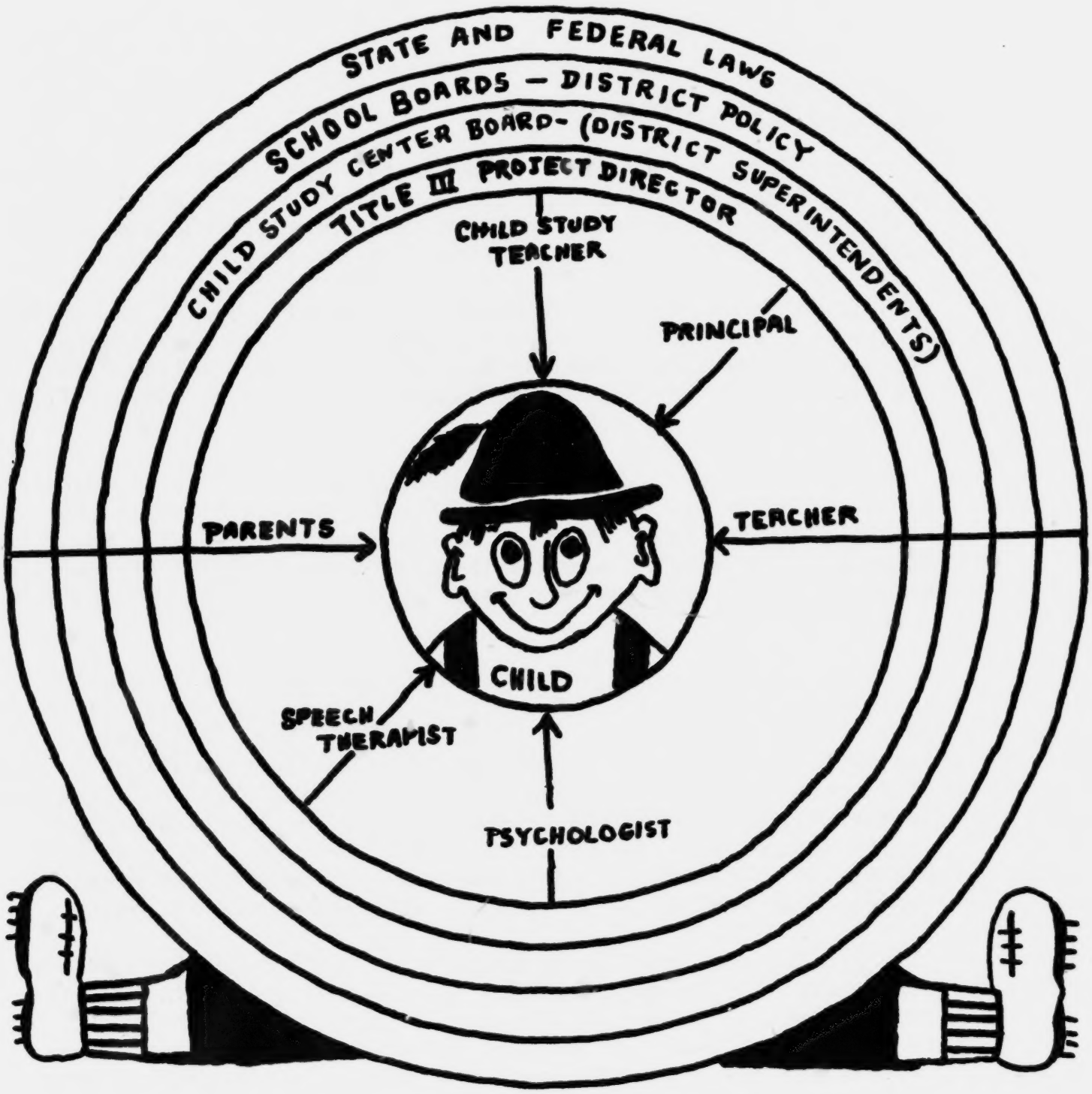
The child study teacher aids the principal in the coordination of the Child Study staffings. In addition this teacher is responsible for the integration of all information regarding the child. He compiles a detailed summary of significant findings of staffings and maintains continuous records of methods attempted and their results.

The child study teacher also provides special services to children. Children are taken out of the classroom individually, or in groups up to four. With the help of other specialists, the child study teacher explores with the child the various methods of learning a particular task. It is essential that the classroom teacher assumes the primary responsibility for the handicapped child's education. The child study teacher's goal is to assist the classroom teacher in providing teaching methods which can be successfully used in the classroom with handicapped students.

Finally the child study teacher, as part of the Child Study Center staff, is responsible for the in-service training of district personnel in school buildings affected by the Title III project. A half-day per week is set aside for staff members to prepare for the in-service sessions, parent conferences, program planning and research.

Children are not worked with individually during the last two weeks of the school year. This time is used for post evaluation of children and end-of-the-year summarizations.

The child study teacher must have a Masters Degree in the area of Special Education, and be certified by the Colorado State Department of Education in the area of the Educationally Handicapped.



PROGRAM INFLUENCES

The above chart shows the levels of influences within the total project. As far as the Title III Project is concerned, the child, the heart of the program, is influenced equally by the performances of the building principal, teacher, parent, child study teacher, speech correctionist and psychologist. Their role is influenced by the project proposal through the director who in turn is responsible to the Child Study Center Board, which is composed of the superintendents of each participating school district. The superintendent's role is established by his school board through district policy as provided by State and Federal Laws.

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